SOME NEW BOOKS.

Abraham Lincoln's Early Life.

It has been generally supposed, in view of the numerous biographies of Lincoln, one at least of which was extremely elaborate, and purported to be exhaustive, that there was nothing of interest or importance left to be discovered. That the assumption, however, was ill-founded will be plain enough to every reader of the papers now reprinted from *McClure's Magazine*, under the collective title of *The Early Life of Abraham Lincoln* (New York and London, S. S. McClure). That there was a considerable field for research still unexplored has been proved by the authors of this book, IDA M. TARBELL and J. MCCANN DAVIS, who have unearthed many unpublished documents, and have collected not a few unpublished reminiscences of Lincoln's early friends. They have succeeded in tracing the genealogy of Lincoln, and in connecting him with a distinguished family of Massachusetts; they have placed beyond question the legitimacy of his birth; and they have demonstrated that too much emphasis has been laid by most of his biographers upon the wretchedness of the circumstances amid which his childhood and youth was passed, the truth being that he was no worse off than the children of the average Kentucky pioneer. We purpose to glance very briefly at the evidence for these three assertions, which constitute the most valuable contributions made by the authors of this volume to a biography of Lincoln.

I.

The memoranda on which Lincoln's genealogy is founded are derived partly from the Hon Solomon Lincoln of Hingham, Mass., partly from a tract compiled by Samuel Shackford of Chicago, and partly from supplementary researches and verifications. These data enable us to say with more confidence than can be felt in the evolution of most American pedigrees, that the ancestor from whom Abraham Lincoln was directly descended was Samuel Lincoln, who, in 1637, being then 17 years old, emigrated from Norfolkshire, England, to Hingham, Mass. Samuel's fourth son was Mordecai Lincoln, born in 1667, whose eldest son, also called Mordecai, emigrated to New Jersey, and thence to Pennsylvania in 1714. The second Mordecai's eldest son was John Lincoln, who, in 1758, went to Virginia. *His* third son was Abraham Lincoln, who, in 1780, or thereabout, emigrated to Kentucky. Abraham's third son was Thomas Lincoln, born in 1778, whose first son was Abraham Lincoln, sixteenth President of the United States. For reasons to be noted presently, Lincoln's father was the poorest and the least educated in the whole direct line of his American progenitors. The first Mordecai, son of the English emigrant, was the owner of a sawmill, a grist mill, and a furnace for smelting iron ore, and, besides bequeathing these to his younger sons, was able to leave his "son Mordecai" 110 pounds; to his "son Abraham" 60 pounds, "besides what he already has had," and to the oldest sons of Abraham and Mordecai 10 pounds each when they should come of age. Provision was also made for sending three grandsons to college, should they desire a liberal education. From Samuel Lincoln, elder brother of the first Mordecai, and eldest son of the English emigrant, were descended the two Governors of Massachusetts named Levi Lincoln, and also Enoch Lincoln, Governor of Maine. The second Mordecai Lincoln, who emigrated to New Jersey, and subsequently to Pennsylvania, became a large land owner in both colonies. His son, John Lincoln, owned at one time 300 acres in Middlesex county, New Jersey and subsequently a farm in Union county, adjoining Exeter, Pennsylvania, which he sold when he emigrated to Virginia. This John Lincoln, in 1773, conveyed to his son, Abraham (the President's grandfather), a tract of 210 acres of land, which, with a small addition, was sold seven years later for "five thousand pounds of current money of Virginia," a sum equal to about $17,000 at that date. In the same year Abraham Lincoln moved to Kentucky, where he purchased three large tracts of land, namely, 400 acres at Long Run, in Jefferson county, 800 acres near Green River Lick, and 500 acres in Campbell county. He settled near the first tract, and all went well with his family until 1788, when he was killed by an Indian. The inventory taken after his death proves that, besides his real estate, he owned more personal property than most of his neighbors. For a pioneer, indeed, he had an unusual amount of stock, farming implements, and tools, and his cabin contained comforts which were rare in Kentucky at that date. Nearly all of his estate was inherited by his eldest son, Mordecai, who became a well-to-do and popular citizen. Of this uncle, Lincoln had a high opinion and on one occasion remarked: "I have often said that Uncle Mord had run off with all the talents of the family." Of Josiah, the second son, very little is known beyond the fact that, as the records show, he owned and sold land. He left Kentucky when a young man, to settle in Harrison county, Indiana, where he died. It was for the youngest of the children, Thomas, a lad of ten years at the time, that the death of Abraham Lincoln was the most disastrous blow. It turned him adrift to become a "wandering laboring boy" before he had learned even to read. Thomas seems not to have inherited any of his father's estate, and from the first to have been obliged to shift for himself, obtaining a subsistence by rough farm work of all kinds, learning, however, in the mean time, the trade of carpenter and cabinet maker. According to one of his acquaintances, "Tom had the best set of tools in what was then Washington county." But it has been alleged that, although a skilful craftsman for his day, he never became a thrifty or ambitious man. The authors of this book point out, what seems to have been unknown to his other biographers, that, while it may be true that Thomas Lincoln plied his trade spasmodically, he unquestionably shared the pioneer's love for land; for when but 25 years old, and still unmarried, he was able to buy, and did buy a farm in Hardin county, Ky. He must have been above the grade of the ordinary country boy to have the energy and ambition not only to learn a trade, but to secure a farm through his own efforts by the time he was twenty-five. It is admitted that, owing to his father's untimely death, he was illiterate, never doing more "in the way of writing than to write bunglingly his own name." Nevertheless, he had the reputation among his neighbors of being good natured and obliging, and of possessing "good, strong horse sense." Although, too, he was considered "a very quiet sort of man," he was known to be determined in his opinions, and quite competent to defend his rights by force if they were flagrantly violated. He was a moral man, and, in the crude way of the pioneer, religious.

II.

We come to the second point made good by the authors of this book, namely, the legitimacy of Lincoln's birth. The most cogent testimony procurable in regard to the character of the parents of Abraham Lincoln is set forth in an appendix. It is that of Dr. Christopher Columbus Graham, who was born at Worthington Station, near Danville, Ky., in 1784, and lived in the State until his death, at the age of 101, in 1885. He was for many years the owner of the famous Harrodsburg Springs, but in 1852 he sold the estate comprising them to the War Department of the United States as a retreat for invalid officers. Although a physician by profession, he was, by predilection, a botanist, geologist, and naturalist, and his observations on the fauna, flora, and strata of Kentucky are of recognized scientific value. A recluse and a student, he heard little or nothing of the stories about the worthlessness of Thomas Lincoln and his wife, which were circulated at the time of Abraham Lincoln's election to the Presidency, and it was only by an accident that his knowledge of the facts was given to the public. Happening to be paying a visit in the spring of 1882 to Capt. J. W. Wartmann, Clerk of the United States Court at Evansville, Ind., he was overheard to say that he was present at the marriage of Thomas Lincoln. Appreciating the historical importance of such evidence, and perceiving that it might lead to the discovery of documentary proof of the marriage, Mr. Wartmann secured from Dr. Graham an affidavit, in which the latter testified that he was present at the marriage of Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks in Washington county, near the town of Springfield, Ky., on June 12, 1806, and that one Jesse Head, a Methodist preacher of Springfield, performed the ceremony. Dr. Graham further testified that he knew the said Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks very well, and knew the said Nancy Hanks to have been virtuous and respectable, and of good parentage. On the publication of this affidavit, the *New York Christian Advocate*, the leading organ of the Methodist Episcopal Church, raised several pertinent questions; as, for instance, Was Dr. Graham, at ninety-eight years of age, in full possession of his faculties?; and, secondly, Was there a Methodist preacher named Jesse Head? Both of these questions were answered in the affirmative by a large number of competent witnesses, including the grandson of Jesse Head and the Clerk of the Washington County Court, who forwarded a copy of the marriage certificate. It must now, therefore, be acknowledged to be absolutely certain that there never should have been any doubts raised about the marriage of Lincoln's parents.

It was in the shop of one Joseph Hanks, in Elizabethtown, Ky., that Thomas Lincoln learned the carpenter's trade. There he met a niece of his employer, Nancy Hanks, whom, when he was 28 years old, he married. Nancy Hanks, like her husband, was a Virginian. Her early experience in life had, in some ways, been similar, for the Hanks family had been drawn into Kentucky by the fascination of Boone, as had the Lincolns. But while, in respect of her surroundings and of her family history, Nancy Hanks had much in common with Thomas Lincoln, in nature, education, and ambition, she seems to have been quite another person. A fair and delicate woman, who could read and write, who had ideas of refinement and a desire to get more from life than fortune had allotted her, was hardly enough like Thomas Lincoln to be very happy with him. She was still more unfit to be his wife because of a sensitive nature which made her brood over her situation, a situation rendered more hopeless by the fact that she had neither the force of character nor the strength of body to improve it; if, indeed, she had any clear notion of what it lacked.

III.

Thomas and Nancy Lincoln were married near Beechland, in Washington county, Ky., the date being, as we have said, June 12, 1806. The wedding was celebrated by an "infare," or festival given by the bride's guardian, to which came all the neighbors, and, according to Dr. Graham, all those who happened to be in the neighborhood were made welcome. He tells how he heard of the wedding while "out hunting for roots," and went "just to get a good supper. I saw Nancy Hanks Lincoln at her wedding," he continues, "a fresh looking girl, I should say over twenty. I was at the infare, too, given by her guardian, and only girls with money had guardians appointed by the court. We had bear meat (that you can eat the grease of, and it not rise like other fats); venison; wild turkey and ducks; eggs, wild and tame (so common that you could buy them at two bits a bushel); maple sugar swung on a string, to bite off for coffee or whiskey; syrup in big gourds; peach and honey; a sheep that the two families barbecued whole over coals of wood burned in a pit and covered with green boughs to keep the juices in; and a race for the whiskey bottle. Our table was of the puncheons cut from solid logs, and, on the next day, they were the floor of the new cabin" Dr. Graham adds: "It is all stuff about Tom Lincoln's keeping his wife in an open shed in the winter when the wild animals left the woods, and stood in the corners next the stick-and-clay chimneys, so as not to freeze to death; or, if climbers, got on the roof. The Lincolns had a cow and a calf, milk and butter, a good feather bed, for I have slept in it (while they took the buffalo robes on the floor, because I was a doctor). They had home-woven 'kiverlids,' big and little pots, a loom and wheel; and William Hardesty, who was there, too, can say with me that Tom Lincoln was a man, and took care of his wife."

After his marriage, Thomas Lincoln settled in Elizabethtown, and it is true that his home there was a log cabin, but the authors of this volume remind us that, at that date, few people in Kentucky had anything else. The great majority of the population still lived in log cabins, so that the home of Thomas Lincoln was as good as the homes of most of his neighbors. Little is known of his position in Elizabethtown, but there is proof that he had credit in the community, for the descendants of two of the early storekeepers of the place still remember seeing on their grandfathers' account book, sundry items charged to T. Lincoln. Tools and groceries were the chief purchases he made, though, on one of the ledgers, a pair of "silk suspenders," worth a dollar and a half, was entered. He was sufficiently respected by the public authorities to be appointed, in 1816, a road surveyor, or, as the office is known in some localities, Supervisor. In a word, all of the documents mentioning Thomas Lincoln, which the authors of this book have been able to discover, show him to have had a much better social and financial status in Hardin county than he has been credited with.

It was at Elizabethtown that the first child of the Lincolns was born, a daughter. Soon after this event Thomas Lincoln decided to combine farming with his carpenter's trade and moved to the farm he had bought in 1803, in Hardin county. Here he was living, when, on Feb. 12, 1809, his second child, a boy, was born. The little newcomer was called Abraham, after his grandfather, a name which, like other Biblical appellations, had persisted through many generations of descendants from the first English emigrant to Massachusetts. Mrs. Lincoln, who, as we have seen, was better educated than her husband, was at great pains to teach her children what she knew, and, at her knee, they learned all the Bible lore, fairy tales, and country legends that she had been able to gather in her poor life. As soon as they were old enough, the Lincoln children went to school, although at that day the school terms were irregular, their length being determined by the ability of the settlers to afford an itinerant schoolmaster and pay him a small salary. Many of the schoolmasters were Catholics, strolling Irishmen from the Irish colony in Tennessee, or French priests from Kaskaskia. Lincoln's first teacher, Zachariah Riney, was a Catholic. Of his second teacher, Caleb Hazel, even less is known than of Riney. One of his Kentucky contemporaries and neighbors, Austin Dollaher, says that Abraham Lincoln, in the days when he was a schoolmate, was "an unusually bright boy, and made splendid progress in his studies. He learned faster than any of his schoolmates. Though so young, he studied very hard. He would get spicewood brushes, hack them up on a log, and burn them, two or three together, for the purpose of giving light by which he might pursue his studies."

IV.

In 1816 an important event happened to the boy Abraham Lincoln. His father emigrated to Indiana, partly on account of his dislike to slavery, but chiefly owing to the tangled condition of land titles in Kentucky. The farm to which Thomas Lincoln, accompanied by his wife and children, journeyed on horseback and by wagon, was situated about fifteen miles north of the Ohio River, and a mile and a half east of Gentryville, Spencer county, in a forest so dense that the travellers' road had to be hewed out as they went. On arriving at the new abode, an axe was put into the hands of the boy Abraham, and he was set to work to aid in clearing a field for corn, and to help build the "half-face camp," which, for a year, was the home of the Lincolns. There were few more primitive abiding places in the wilderness of Indiana than this of young Lincoln, and there were few families, even in that day, who were forced to practise more makeshifts to get a living. The cabin, which presently took the place of the "half-face" camp, had but one room with a loft above. For a time, there was no window, door or floor; not even the traditional deerskin hung before the aperture. There was no oil-paper over the opening for light; there was no puncheon covering on the ground. The furniture was of domestic manufacture; the table and chairs were of the rudest sort—rough slabs of wood in which holes were bored and legs fitted in. Their bed frame was made of poles, held up by two outer posts, the ends being made firm by inserting the poles in auger-holes that had been bored in a log that was a part of the cabin wall; skins were its chief coverings. Little Abraham's bed was even more primitive. He slept on a heap of dry leaves in a corner of the loft, to which he mounted by means of pegs driven into the wall. Corndodger was the every-day bread of the Lincoln household, and there were times when potatoes were the only food on the table.

These "pretty pinching times," as Abraham Lincoln once described them, only lasted for three years, or until 1819. The year before Nancy Lincoln had died, and, toward the close of 1819, Thomas Lincoln went back to Kentucky, and returned with a new wife, the Widow Johnston, whose maiden name was Sally Bush. The new mother came well provided with household furniture, bringing many things unfamiliar to little Abraham, including bedding, cooking utensils, and knives and forks. She was a woman of energy, thrift, and gentleness, and at once made the cabin homelike and taught the children habits of cleanliness and comfort.

From this point, Lincoln's previous biographers had comparatively clear sailing. It is in the points to which we have referred that the authors of the book before us have materially added to our knowledge of his early life.

The Japanese as They Really Are.

It is a sober and sensible, and, therefore, trustworthy account of contemporary Japan which Mr. WILLIAM ELEROY CURTIS has given us in the two volumes collectively entitled *The Yankees of the East* (Stone & Kimball). The author evidently was convinced that a new book on Japan was needed, for he has no high opinion of the comments of some preceding observers. He points out, for instance, that Murray has published a guide to Japan, but he pronounces it incomplete and unsatisfactory. In his opinion, the most useful books for the ordinary traveller are Chamberlain's "Things Japanese" and Miss Scidmore's "Jinrikisha Days." Griffis's "The Mikado's Empire" is regarded by Mr. Curtis as the most adequate of all historical works, while Dr. J. J. Rein's remarkable but costly volume is acknowledged to be the best authority on the arts and industries of the country. It is also suggested that one may get an accurate and comprehensive glimpse of Japanese home life by reading Miss Alice Bacon's "A Japanese Interior" and her "Japanese Girls and Women." On the other hand, it is alleged that Sir Edwin Arnold's roseate views of Japan were obtained from a pretty villa at the top of a hill in the residence district of Tokio. The author thinks that it would not be polite or proper to repeat the gossip that is freely circulated concerning the behavior of this gentleman during his stay in Japan, but it may be said that the missionaries do not refer to him as a shining example of Western morality. We are told that he wrote "The Light of Asia" at Omori, a seashore resort, where he was surrounded by a choice selection of geisha girls, and the guides now point out the scenes of his adventures as they do other places of historical interest. As for the prose poems and pictures of Japanese life that have come from the pen of Lafcadio Hearn, these are admitted to be "a little more accurate than the writings of Sir Edwin, but," continues Mr. Curtis, "practical people have not been able to see the same things in the same light as they appear to his eye. Mr. Hearn is a Greek by birth, and lived for many years in the United States, where he did newspaper work at Cincinnati and New Orleans. For a time he was a teacher in a Government school in the interior of Japan, but later has been living in Kobe. He is a dreamer, with a poetic temperament and a wonderful gift of words."

In a useful preliminary chapter the American traveller is warned not to buy anything in Yokohama until he returns, after visiting other cities. He is further told, what other travellers have omitted to mention, that a great drawback to travel in the interior of Japan is the vigor and activity of the insect life. The natives, who are toughened by continual exposure, do not seem to notice the infliction; the tender flesh of foreigners is more tempting, and, whenever one arrives in a rural town, the creeping and jumping things have a *matsuri*, which is, it seems, the name of a Japanese festival, when everybody comes out for a good time. Mr. Curtis is, we repeat, the first observer who has revealed this fact, and he adds that the Japanese insects are peculiarly active. "They are always on the lookout for a job," he says, "and when night comes they begin business in earnest." Much more agreeable is the admonition that, wherever an American traveller goes in Japan, he should make himself known as an American. That, it seems, is an open sesame to every home and every heart. The Japanese hate the English, the French, and the Russians, although they treat them politely because politeness is due to their own self-respect and the laws of hospitality. A citizen of the United States, however, requires no further introduction than a mention of his nationality. The first question asked of a stranger is, "O kuni wa?" (What is your honorable country?) Englishmen who know the sentiments of the people often proclaim themselves Yankees in order to get the best rooms in the house and the largest share of attention.

Of the twenty-three chapters in this book we can touch only upon those which deal with the question of labor and wages, with Japanese methods of farming, and with the subject of marriage, divorce, and the social evil, which cannot be wholly overlooked in any conspectus of the Mikado's empire.

I.

According to Mr. Curtis, it is a grave mistake to say that the Japanese are not an original people, but that they have always been, and still are, merely imitative. It is undoubtedly true that the Japanese workman can make anything he has ever seen. Give him a most complicated mechanism, a watch, a printing press, or an electrical apparatus, and he will reproduce it exactly, and set it running without instruction. He can imitate any process, and can copy any pattern or design, more exactly and skilfully than any other workman in the world. It is undoubtedly that faculty which has enabled Japan to make such rapid progress in Western civilization. Amid the circumstances in which the lot of the Japanese people has been cast during the last quarter of a century, originality has not been needed, but rather the power of adaptability and imitation. These very powers, if they stood alone, would make Japan a dangerous competitor for the European nations in manufactured merchandise. As a matter of fact, they have evinced a remarkable faculty of selection. They have found one thing in Switzerland, another in Sweden, another in England, others in Germany, France, and the United States, and they have rejected what is not of value to them as readily as they have adopted those things which are to their advantage. At the same time, avers Mr. Curtis, it is a mistake to suppose that the Japanese people have no originality. The records of their Patent Office, to which reference is made in a chapter of this book, are enough to settle that question beyond a doubt, for they show proofs of the development of a high degree of inventive genius, particularly in the line of labor-saving appliances and machinery.

It appears that the enlistment and employment of about 400,000 mechanics and coolies for the war with China first caused the employer class in Japan to comprehend that they have the best, the cheapest, and the most skilful labor, for the money, in the world. There are no labor unions in Japan, nor are there likely to be, in view of the multitude of people struggling for a living, which consists of a mat to sleep upon and a few handfuls of rice for food. The advance in the cost of labor caused by the war, though it was felt, was very small, when considered in the light of wages paid in other countries. One or two cents a day does not seem very much to men who are accustomed to receive $50 and $75 a month, but in Japan, where the average income of the workingman does not exceed $45 a year, it is a matter of importance on both sides.

From the United States Consul-General at Yokohama the author obtained the average wages paid in that city, which is the principal shipping port in the country, and where the foreign population is largest. We proceed to quote some figures, but we caution the reader that the wages named are paid to Japanese artisans in the local money, which is worth only about one-half as much as American gold. The average pay of carpenters in Yokohama is 30 cents a day; of stone cutters, 36 cents; of bricklayers, 33 cents; of dyers, 25 cents; of tailors for Japanese clothing, 28 cents, and for foreign clothing, 49 cents; of porcelain makers and lacquer makers, 29 cents; of compositors, 29 cents, and of printing press men, 26 cents; of farm hands, 19 cents, and of weavers, 15 cents. Wages paid by the month range from $5.74 to bakers and $4.82 to weavers to $2.31 for farm hands and $1.16 for women house servants. It should be noted that the average working day is ten hours. Factory labor receives even a smaller remuneration. Embroidery women, who produce the work that is so much prized by Americans and Europeans for decorative purposes, seldom receive more than 15 or 20 cents a day in our money. One of the most prominent tea-shipping houses in Japan, that of Middleton & Co., employs a large number of persons, men and women, who work from 5 o'clock in the morning to 6 at night, with three short intervals, when they eat their rice or what other refreshments they bring with them. The highest wages paid by this firm are 42 sen a day, which is equivalent to 21 cents in United States currency. This is received by men who are experts in handling tea. The lowest wages are paid to young boys and girls, who pick over the tea leaves to remove the stems and other foreign substances. They receive 13 sen, or 6½ cents, a day for about twelve hours' work, not including their resting spells. It should, of course, be borne in mind that the wages current in Yokohama are the highest paid in the empire.

II.

In the chapter on Japanese methods of farming we are told that Japan is one vast garden, and that, as one looks over the fields, he might imagine them to be covered with toy farms, where children were playing with the laws of nature and raising samples of different kinds of vegetables and grain. Everything is on a diminutive scale, and the work is as fine and accurate as that applied to a cloisonné vase. What, asks Mr. Curtis, would an Illinois or Iowa farmer think of planting his corn, wheat, oats, and barley in bunches, and then, when it is three or four inches high, transplanting every spear of it in rows, about as far apart as one can stretch one's finger. The truth is that a Japanese farmer weeds his wheat field as carefully as a Connecticut farmer weeds his onion bed, and cultivates his barley and potatoes with as much assiduity as a Long Island farmer bestows upon his asparagus or his flowers. Not only every kernel of grain, but every particle of straw is saved, and the latter is put to a thousand uses. They make of it hats, shoes ropes, roofs, matting, the partitions and floors of houses, waterproof coats, baskets, boxes, and a thousand and one other useful articles. They braid it for fences also, and the finer, softer qualities are cut up for fodder. There is very little hay raised in Japan. The grass is wiry and indigestible. It cuts the intestines of animals. Some alfalfa is grown, but it does not prosper. In the neighborhood of Kobé, on the southern shore, the soil seems better adapted than elsewhere for hay, and the best beef comes from that locality. The ordinary Japanese horse, which originated in China and is called a griffin seems to like straw and to thrive upon it, but he is small and ugly and not capable of much endurance. A journey of fifteen miles will use him up. The straw is chopped very fine for feeding purposes, is mixed with oats, barley, millet, and other grain, and, by adding water, is made into a kind of mush. To oxen is given the same food as to horses, and in some parts of the country one sees a good many of them. They draw their loads by ropes stretched from a collar to the axle of a two-wheeled cart. One man leads them by cords attached to rings in their noses, while another steers the vehicle with a tongue that sticks out behind. On rare occasions you find a man ploughing with a cow or an ox, but more frequently such work is done with man or woman power. The Japanese plough is the section of the trunk or a branch of a young tree, with the proper curve to it, and it is all wood except a narrow-pointed blade, which is fitted into the framework. It has only one handle.

In Japan a couple of acres is considered a large tract of land for farming purposes. Most of the farms are of smaller area, and the crops are greatly diversified. Upon such a little piece of land will be grown almost everything known to the vegetable kingdom; a few square feet of wheat, barley, corn, and millet, a plat of beans perhaps ten feet wide by twenty feet long, an equal area of potatoes and peas, then a patch of onions about as big as a grave, while beets, lettuce, salsify, turnips, sweet potatoes, vegetable oysters, and other varieties of cereals and roots occupy the rest of the area. The farmer scans his growing crop every morning, just as an engineer would inspect the movements of his machinery, and if anything is wrong he repairs it. If a weed appears in the bean patch he pulls it up. If a hill of potatoes or anything else fails it is immediately replanted. When he cuts down a tree he always plants another to take its place; the artificial forests of Japan cover many hundreds of square miles and permanently assure the prosperity of the country. We add that, as one crop is harvested, the soil is worked over, fertilized, and replanted with something else. The largest area of agricultural lands in Japan, perhaps as much as nine-tenths of the whole, is devoted to raising rice, and, as that crop requires a great deal of water, the paddies are banked up into terraces, one above the other, and divided off into little plats, 35 or 40 feet square, with ridges of earth between them, to keep the water from flowing away when they are flooded. All farming land is irrigated by a system that is a thousand years old. As in French Canada, so in Japan, the farmers live in villages, and their farms are sometimes a mile, or two or even three miles, away from their homes. There are no fences or other visible marks of division, but every man knows his own land, for it has been in his family for generations. Irrigating ditches and little paths are usually the boundary lines. Theoretically, all the land belongs to the Emperor, but the greater part of that under cultivation has been long held in the same families, and always descends from the father to the oldest son. Sales are made and recorded very much as they are in this country, and land is mortgaged to secure loans. The actual value of every acre is fixed upon the assessor's book for taxation purposes. The official statistics of Japan show that there are 11,400,008 men and 10,948,053 women engaged in agriculture, which is more than half the total population.

No other grain or plant requires so much care as rice, and, from the beginning of the season, the paddy fields are full of patient workers, men and women, standing half way up to their knees in the mud, preparing the soil or grubbing out the water weeds that spring up rapidly and would smother the young shoots if they were not removed. Men and women work together, wearing wide straw hats that make them look like so many mushrooms, and, although the rest of the body may be naked, except for the loin cloth that is prescribed by law, they all wear thick cotton leggings as high as their knees, to protect them from sludge, bloodsuckers, and water vermin of various kinds that swarm in the filthy soil. Every farmer raises some rice. The rice product exceeds five bushels per caput of population, and more than half of it is exported. The rice of Japan is the best in the world and brings the highest prices in the markets of Europe and the United States. The product of China, India, and Corea is of poorer quality and much cheaper, and a majority of the farmers in Japan prefer to sell their own crop for export and buy that which is imported, for home consumption. Rice is used by the people in an infinite variety of forms. It appears upon the table of the prince as well as of the pauper three times a day, just like bread in America, and enters into as many food preparations as our flour. In connection with this topic Mr. Curtis remarks that there can be no market for American agricultural implements and machinery in Japan for two simple reasons: first, the farms are not big enough, and, secondly, labor is too plentiful. If a Japanese farmer should introduce a modern reaper and self-binder on his farm he would cut down everything in the way of crops while he was turning it around, and there would be nothing left for him and his family to do all the rest of the season.

III.

We pass to the chapters on marriage and divorce, and on the peculiar institution known as the *yoshiwara*. There have been in the course of centuries marked changes in the matrimonial customs of Japan, but it appears that now, when a young man wants to get married, he does not offer his heart and hand to the girl he loves, but if an arrangement has not been already made for him by his parents with the daughter of a neighbor, he goes to a discreet married friend, and asks that he and his wife act as *nakodos* or go-betweens, for him in the matter. The gentleman and lady who undertake this delicate function assume responsibilities that few people in the United States would care to accept. They not only agree to find a suitable partner for their friend, but remain through life in the relation of godfather and godmother to the young couple. They are expected to assist them if they get into difficulties or suffer misfortunes, and to serve as a board of arbitration to settle disputes that may arise in the family. Strange to say, this responsibility is not dreaded in Japan.

As a rule, in the upper circles of society marriages between the sons and daughters of friendly families are arranged by the parents when the children are very young, and a boy or girl often knows whom he or she is going to marry long before either is old enough to understand the nature of the relation. They are not allowed, however, to associate with each other. Confucius taught that children of seven years should be separated according to sex, but the Japanese are a little more liberal than the Chinese in this respect, and boys and girls may play together until they are ten or twelve years of age. After that their association is forbidden. Courting is impossible, and even the children of families whose houses may adjoin grow up as strangers to each other. This rule applies to the nearest relations. There can be no such thing as friendship between young men and young women. It is disreputable for a Japanese young man to marry for love. When a young man and a young woman are known to love each other, public sentiment places them very low in the scale of morals.

On the other hand, the social laws of Japan require that people shall marry at the age of 18 or 19, and it is a disgrace for a man or a woman to remain single after they are 20 or 21. As a consequence, there are very few old bachelors or old maids in the empire. Although courting, as we have said, is impossible, a young man usually has an opportunity to inspect the girl selected by his parents or his *nakodos* (go-betweens) before an engagement is decided upon, and if either is dissatisfied with the appearance of the other the negotiation comes to an end. This meeting is called a *mi-yai*, which means, literally, "mutual seeing." According to the etiquette of what is called society the interview may take place at the residence of the go-between or at the house of the young lady's father; but among the lower classes a picnic or a theatre party, a boat ride or an excursion of some sort serves the purpose. If the visit takes place at the house of the young lady's father, the young man and his go-between are received by the host with great politeness. After some conversation on indifferent subjects the latter claps his hands and the young lady herself appears, dressed in her prettiest kaimono and obi (robe and sash), and bearing a tray containing three cups and a pot of tea. These she places upon the mat in front of the guests and proceeds to serve the beverage. Girls are trained to perform this duty with the utmost degree of grace, for tea pouring is regarded as the highest accomplishment a Japanese woman can acquire. She is not to speak unless she is spoken to, and the responsibility of beginning a conversation with her rests upon the go-between. If he is a person of tact he introduces some subject that is calculated to bring out whatever conversational powers the young woman may possess, and in the mean time she sits upon her heels and endeavors to be as charming as possible. The young man may engage in the conversation, but it is not good form for him to address his remarks to her. He may look at her as much as he likes, but it is bad manners for him to show the young lady any particular attention. After the *mi-yai* is over the young man and his go-between retire for consultation. He thinks the matter over, and if he decides that the candidate is acceptable his parents send her a box of handsome gifts. Then the bride's parents send presents in return, which is equivalent to an engagement, and an early day is selected for the wedding. If the young lady should happen to object, which is not often the case, as she is guided entirely by the wishes of her parents, the go-between is notified before an opportunity to send presents is given. When the day for the wedding is selected the trousseau of the bride and several articles of household furniture are sent to her husband's home, and they are usually exhibited to the friends of the family beforehand. The wedding gown is always pure white, and the bridegroom is attired in a *kamishimo*, a peculiar dress made of various kinds of silk in colors according to his rank.

The wedding ceremony takes place at the house of the bridegroom's parents, and the friends of both families are invited to attend. The bride is escorted there at nightfall by her parents and other members of her family and the go-betweens, followed by servants bearing gifts to the family of the bridegroom. It was formerly the custom to light a bonfire in front of the gate of her parental home and to lift her over it, the ceremony signifying purification. The bride is met outside the main door by the members of the groom's family, but he remains seated on a cushion in front of the *tokonoma*, a shallow recess or alcove that is found in all Japanese houses, and is used for the display of ornaments. When she enters the room she is escorted to a seat beside him. The go-betweens sit at his right, and at his left are usually two married ladies or two little girls dressed in white to serve as bridesmaids. When the party is thus placed, a chorus of voices in the adjoining room sings a Japanese song called "Utai." A low table of white wood that has never been used is then brought in, and a tray is placed upon it containing three cups, which one of the bridesmaids fill with saké, or rice brandy. The smallest cup is handed to the bride, who takes dainty sips from it and then passes it to the bridegroom, who does the same. The second and third cups are filled in a similar manner, and the ceremony is repeated. As the bridegroom returns the third cup to the officiating bridesmaid all clap their hands, which is a salute of approbation, announcing that the ceremony is over. There is no kissing or embracing, but a great many congratulations are offered to the young couple and guests of literary attainments are expected to hand them poems of their own composition, which are afterward bound in a little book as a memento of the occasion. The couple then retire to put off the wedding robes and resume their ordinary garments, and afterward join the guests at a feast, which is served with great ceremony. When the guests have left the house, the go-betweens take the couple to their bedroom, assist them to remove their garments, and put them to bed. After they are well covered up, another cup of saké is passed around and the final good nights are repeated. In the morning the father of the groom or the male go-between goes to Police Headquarters and registers the marriage, giving the names, ages, occupations, and residence of the couple. On the third day after the wedding the bride returns to her father's house, to stay three or seven days, as the case may be. If the first three days of married life have not been satisfactory to the bride, she notifies the go-betweens of that fact, and does not return to her husband's home, which is equivalent to a divorce. If the husband, on his part, is dissatisfied, he also notifies the go-betweens, and they are expected to communicate with the bride's parents. If a divorce is insisted upon by either party, it must be accepted by the other. But such a proceeding is seldom resorted to, except where misrepresentation has been made as to the temper and physical condition of either party. If the bride or groom proves to be deformed, impotent, or diseased in any manner, a divorce is considered honorable and legitimate, and it is only necessary to register the fact at Police Headquarters.

There are seven causes, according to Confucius, for which a man may divorce his wife. They are disobedience, a failure to bear children, unchastity, jealousy, an incurable disease, dishonesty, and a sharp tongue. In other words, he can get rid of her whenever he likes, and by a very simple process. All he has to do is to write her a letter, known as the "three lines and a half," declaring that everything is over between them, and advising her to return to her parents. Such a letter addressed to her father or her eldest brother, if she has no father, will answer the same purpose. Then he must go to the registrar's office and report himself as a divorced man. For similar causes a wife may get rid of her husband if she desires to do so, but she will lose her social position if she has any, and is much more likely to be respected and make a second marriage if she is the defendant instead of the plaintiff in the case. Mr. Curtis admits that this is somewhat of a paradox, but he maintains that it throws a search light upon the social system of Japan. What is there required above all from women is obedience. That is the highest of virtues, and no obedient woman would ever seek a divorce from her husband for any cause.

IV.

While divorces among members of the upper class of the Japanese are very rare, it is doubtful if there is any country upon earth, not even a Mohammedan country, where they are more frequent among the common people. The author knows the superintendent of the lighters of a steamship company of Yokohama who has been divorced nine times, and a missionary from Chicago told him that his former cook had had seven wives in succession when he left his employer four years ago, and that several had since been added to the list. The official records show that the higher civilization advances in Japan the more numerous are divorces, though the difference is not pronounced. In 1893 the number of marriages per 1,000 inhabitants was 86.6, and the number of divorces 28.2. It will thus be seen that the number of divorces now taking place annually is about one-third as large as the number of marriages. The condensed statistics quoted in this book do not show how many of the divorces were sought by husbands, but the author was told by a person conversant with the detailed returns that only about one per cent. of them originated with the wives. The morals of the women seem to have very little to do with divorce. The prevailing cause is dissatisfaction and a lack of affection on the part of the men, who become tired of their wives, and want to try another chance in the lottery of marriage. In Japan the law of chastity applies to wives, but not to husbands. From the nobility to the peasantry a double standard of morals obtains. The husband may be as licentious as he likes, and the wife seldom grumbles, for if she does she is liable to lose her home and be separated from her children; as, moreover, she has been educated to believe that whatever man does is right, she doesn't think much about the matter.

It is well known that a Japanese woman never addresses her husband in terms of endearment, nor has the Japanese man any pet names for his wife. While there is no doubt genuine affection and devotion on both sides in the majority of families, both sexes have been taught to repress their emotions. A Japanese husband never kisses his wife or his children. Children and wives are taught to respect and reverence the head of the family, be he father, husband, brother, or son; and this deference is carried much further than with us; but if caresses are ever exchanged the world is not allowed to know it. When a husband introduces his wife to his friends it is with words of depreciation. He says this is my "humble" wife, or my "stupid" wife, or my "unworthy" wife, or my "unfortunate" wife, just as he refers to his humble or unworthy home. The husband, too, always precedes the wife whenever they enter a house or a room or are walking together upon the street. When guests are present, the wife always takes a seat at a distance near the door. It is, in short, accounted the duty of woman to wait upon man. If a mat, or tea, or anything else is wanted, the wife always goes for it. She is only one degree above the servants.

Unlike many of the foreign writers on Japan, Mr. Curtis repeatedly avers in the course of these two volumes that the Japanese women are not good looking. On page 250 of the first volume he says that she "does not have a pretty figure. She is always short and stumpy. Her neck and waist are large, her shoulders are broad, and her flesh seems to be evenly distributed. A modiste would say that she had no shape at all, and therefore it is impossible to make a European dress fit her. The ancient native style of garments, particularly that used by the upper classes, was especially adapted to the peculiarities of the Japanese women." We are assured that a lady always look well in the soft grays and delicate pinks that she selects for her kaimonos, or robes, but one who will look extremely graceful and probably pretty in her native costume, looks like a guy when she puts on a Paris gown, no matter how fine the material or who the maker.

On page 363 of the second volume the author describes a Japanese dinner and the geisha girls who are employed to entertain one. "No matter what Sir Edwin Arnold and other sentimental writers on Japan may say, these girls are not pretty. Their figures are shapeless, their features are flat, their complexions are muddy, their teeth are bad, and, if they wore European garments, one would never glance at them a second time. They cannot compare in looks with the shopgirls of Chicago and New York and the waitresses in our country hotels will average quite as well for beauty. But their kimonos (robes) are of the daintiest shades and combinations of color, their obis (sashes) are of the richest brocades, and their hair is a marvel for its arrangement. All this makes them interesting, and they have pleasing, graceful manners, which often, however, approach familiarity. The geisha girl is not always naughty, but she tries to be attractive, for that is her capital in trade. As the tea houses are frequented by men only, she naturally adopts the manners and the methods that the customers most admire.

V.

Divorce is far more frequent in Japan than in any Mohammedan country, and, bearing in mind the state of things in the lands of Islam, we might infer that there is no scope for the social evil. This is far from being the case in the realm of the Mikado. According to Mr. Curtis, who allots a chapter to the subject, the peculiar institution known as the *yoshiwara* flourishes so rankly in Japan that its 18,000 establishments are said to contain 250,000 inmates. We are reminded that the Buddhists do not forbid prostitution, provided it is not resorted to from a love of pleasure. A woman, they hold, may adopt such a means of earning money for her own needs, or for the support of her family, without committing sin, if her motives are pure. The phrase they use is, "While it defiles the body, it does not defile the heart." Men whom Mr. Curtis knew to be well informed told him that 60 per cent. of the inmates of the *yoshiwaras* are there not only with the consent but with the encouragement of their parents, who sell the bodies of their daughters to the keepers of such establishments for a term of years and receive as a consideration a bonus in cash and a certain amount monthly, which represents a percentage of the earnings of the girl. The author of this book confirms the current belief that it is a custom among the lower classes of the Japanese, who have large families to maintain, to place their daughters in a *yoshiwara* for the earnings they can contribute to the family treasury. It is not only considered honorable on the father's part, but for the daughter also, and she loses no respect from her associates because she adopts such a life for such a purpose. If, on the other hand, she enters the *yoshiwara* voluntarily, or selfishly retains her earnings or wastes them in dissipation, she is despised. This distinction is very clearly drawn, but it appears that the practice is confined to the lower classes of the population.

The inmates of a *yoshiwara*, the term applied to the whole precinct devoted to casual relations, are termed by the law *shogi yuju*, which means "a lady of pleasure," more polite term used in addressing them woman above the age of 16 who desires to upon the life of a courtesan may apply for a license at police headquarters in person, accompanied by at least one of her parents or guardians, and her application must be accompanied by a written certificate signifying their consent. Having obtained her license, the *shogi* makes a contract with the keeper of a *kashi-zashiki*, that is to say, one of the establishments within the precinct of the yoshiwara, under which contract the keeper agrees to provide her with wholesome food, lodgings, and clothing, and pay her, or her parents, as the case may be, a certain percentage of her earnings monthly—usually one-half; and there may be other stipulations. On the other hand, the *shogi* agrees to obey all the rules and regulations, to conduct herself in an orderly manner, to report all gratuities, &c. Contracts cannot be made for more than seven years; the usual term is three. If a woman violates her contract, or behaves badly, her employer is not permitted to punish her, but must report the fact to the police, who administer the necessary discipline. Nor is he permitted to detain her if at any time she desires to abandon her profession before the expiration of the contract. She then seeks the protection of the police, who give her a release or ticket of leave, but require her to report her whereabouts at police headquarters for a certain length of time. The fees charged in the establishments are imposed by the police, and printed schedules with the regulations must be posted in conspicuous places for the information of visitors. Neither the keepers nor the inmates are permitted to solicit custom, either orally or by printed or written invitations, and they are forbidden to request guests to partake of refreshments, or to accompany the women to their rooms.

We are told that, in the precinct occupied by the principal *yoshiwara* in Tokio, the houses are larger, costlier, and of better construction than most of those in the city outside. The majority are of stone or brick, profusely adorned, and having wide porches, pillars, verandas, cupolas, and towers. There is no suggestion of sin or squalor. This colony of people who are compelled to live apart from the rest of human kind evinces unusual pride in appearances. The grounds about the imperial palace are not better kept; the dwellings of the princes and nobles are not more pretentious or furnished with greater elegance or taste. Everything that one sees from the outside is attractive, and, through long, cool corridors you catch glimpses of lovely gardens filled with fruit and flowers and splashing fountains. Gay-colored awnings shelter the western and southern windows from the sun. Marquees are stretched over the lawns, and in the arbors and shady corners are tables where refreshments may be served to order. Tea houses and shops alternate with the dwellings of the young women; everything can be bought inside the precinct that the inhabitants may need. So long, indeed, as their contracts hold, the women are not allowed to go beyond the gate, except in cases of necessity. There is even a Buddhist temple within the *yoshiwara* at which they go to pray—not for the pardon of their sins, but for many and generous lovers. The comprehensive pantheon of Buddhism has supplied special patrons even for these poor souls, to wit, Jizu, "the compassionate," and Benzaiten, who protects widows and orphans and those who have no other friends.

M. W. H.

THE RESPIRATION OF FISHES.

Fishes Are Sometimes Drowned—Some Fishes Will Live for a Time Out of Water.

The fish's gills, which are practically its lungs, are fleshy laminæ on movable bony arches; the number of laminæ varies in different fishes. Each of these laminæ has within it many minute blood vessels. The gill coverings are usually bony.

All living water contains more or less air; fish could not live in water without air. The fish is continually breathing; it takes in water through its mouth, passes it under the gills and out through the gill openings, or it takes in water through the gill openings and passes it under the gills and out through the mouth. From the water thus kept constantly flowing over the gills it absorbs into the many minute blood vessels of the gills, and so into the blood, the air which it requires to aerate the blood. Many fishes, as for example the trout, come to the surface and take in water and air at a gulp, or perhaps air only, filling their air bladders in that way.

Fishes are often drowned, and from a variety of causes. If a fish is caught on a hook through one of its jaws, and the mouth is held open, respiration is interfered with and the fish will finally drown. Sometimes a fish is forced against a wall or a rock and held there by a tide or current, one gill being, perhaps, thus made useless. It may be unable with a single gill to supply itself with sufficient air, and so it may drown. Sometimes a fish becomes wedged in between rocks in such a manner that it cannot use its gills at all, and then it drowns. Fishes caught in gill nets are unable to use their gills and they drown.

If a fish is where it can be observed readily, as, for instance, in a tank at an aquarium, it will be seen to be always breathing. If the fish is inactive, simply idle in the water, the movement of the gill covers may be very slight, just enough to show the opening into the gill cavity and to admit a small volume of water. If the fish is more active and breathing hard, it may throw out the ends of the gill covers enough to reveal the red gills in the cavity back of them. Long, slow breathing is an indication of strength and of good health in a fish. Exercise or continued exertion accelerates the breathing of a fish as it does the breathing of a man.

In aquariums fishes are kept in circulating tanks and in self-sustaining tanks; in self-sustaining tanks the water is kept aerated by the introduction of plant life; in circulating tanks by an inflow of new water, either constant or at intervals, the old water running off by an overflow pipe. When the water is turned on in a circulating tank it is a common thing to see the fishes cluster around the intake opening, as human beings might go to a window in a room, when a breeze had sprung up, for a breath of fresh air. The fishes enjoy the incoming flow of fresh, sweet water with its new stores of air, and they head up close to it, their gill covers opening and closing as they bathe their gills in the refreshing tide. Sometimes the water for circulating tanks is additionally aerated by permitting it to flow for a short space, from the receiving pipe to the distributing tank, through the open air. In the case of sick or ailing fish the water of a tank is sometimes still further charged with air by permitting a stream to flow into it from above, falling for a short space through the open air.

As a rule, fishes do not live long out of water, but there are some that will live for a considerable time. Salt-water minnows, for example, in the fall can be kept alive for four or five days if kept in moist seaweed and where a current of air can get to them. The minnows open and close their gill coverings and take air through the gills in substantially the same manner as when in the water. The minnows in seaweed would live much longer than the same number in a small body of water, from which they would soon exhaust the oxygen, the constituent part of air required to sustain life.

A sturgeon, whose sides have been kept dampened, has been known to live for forty-eight hours out of water. Fishes of the herring family, of which the shad is one, are very delicate; they soon die out of water. Eels will live out of water, in seaweed kept moist, for two or three weeks. Some fishes, killies, carp, mudfish, blennies, and some others, can be shipped long distances if packed in moist water weeds.

There are some fishes which in nature spend more or less of their lives out of water. The climbing perch is one of these. The climbing perch, by means of its fins, climbs up the inclined stem of trees or plants growing near the water which it inhabits; it has an accessory gill which holds sufficient water to keep its gills moist for some hours. The goby comes out of the water at the edge of the land to feed, chiefly on insects. The mudfish has under its jaws a little reservoir of water with which to bathe its gills and sufficient to sustain life for some hours out of water.

Weather Notes from Billville.

From the Atlanta Constitution.

We rise with the thermometer now, not with the lark.

The sun has barbecued the cattle on a thousand hills.

This is the time when you can't possibly appreciate the melting notes of the mocking bird.

The Mayor's celluloid cuffs caught fire yesterday and burnt down the Town Hall.

Even the Democratic party in this neighborhood is in a blaze of glory.

Several candidates got overheated yesterday while running for office.

We don't go to church these hot days. We simply look at the thermometer and fall to praying.